Special features include a “Chronology” outlining important dates in the history of women in American wars and a comprehensive “Bibliography.” The “Categorical Index” is also helpful in grouping entries into browsable themes and includes “Individuals,” “Conflicts and Theaters of Operation,” “Court Cases and Legislation,” “Organizations and Groups,” and “Minorities and Miscellaneous.” “See also” references are helpful as well in contextualizing the entries. The encyclopedia’s contributors include a good mix of academics and historians, many with military expertise.

While there are other similar reference works available, most deal with women in specific conflicts (for example, Doris Weatherford’s American Women During World War II: An Encyclopedia (Routledge, 2010)) or more broadly in conflicts worldwide and throughout history (for example, Bernard A. Cook’s Women and War: A Historical Encyclopedia from Antiquity to the Present (ABC-CLIO, 2006)) making this an ideal source for those interested specifically in American women’s war experiences.

This encyclopedia is recommended for any library supporting history or gender studies programs.—Emily Dill, Executive Director, University Library of Columbus, Columbus, Indiana

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The Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions follows a typical A–Z format. Articles are signed by contributors briefly identified with their academic affiliation in volume one, contain see also references to related topics, and conclude with a bibliography of works consulted or cited. Some articles are illustrated by black and white photographs. Both volumes feature a small section of unpaged color reproductions from various identified sources. Helpful appendices list sources, definitions and abbreviations for the Hebrew Scriptures, rabbinc commentaries and other writings, medieval collections of stories, and anthologies of Jewish folklore. Cross-references and an index to the encyclopedia’s subject matter guide the reader to articles on specific topics.

In line with contemporary folklore studies the Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions accepts both oral and written transmissions as valid expressions of folk culture. Uniformity in transliteration of Yiddish words is achieved by the adoption of the standard YIVO system. Hebrew words are more broadly transliterated to reflect modern pronunciation and usage familiar to English speakers. When places are known by several names the various names are noted. Personal names follow the spelling used by the individual.

Jewish folk narratives that share common motifs with other cultures are accorded the Aarne and Thompson international classification (Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, The Types of Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography second revised edition published in 1961 by Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia; updated in 3 volumes by Hans-Jorg Uther and published by Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia in 2004 as The Types of International Folktales: A Classification and Bibliography Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson). Folk narratives that the Israel Folktale Archives has defined as uniquely Jewish are noted as such.

Jewish folklore can be categorized as cognitive (beliefs, customs), verbal (tales, proverbs, riddles, parables, jokes, lament s), visual (dance, art, costume, food, material culture), or audio/oral (music, songs), all of which are incorporated into the Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions. Perhaps more than other peoples Jews have created, transmitted, and preserved their folklore and traditions through the written word incorporating culture and custom into rabbinic commentary and interpretation and into the novels, poetry, and plays of Jewish authors. These too are addressed in the encyclopedia.

Beliefs and traditions developed around the Jewish life cycle and appointed festivals were important signifiers of their identity among Jews living in diaspora. Numerous articles concern folk wisdom and customs associated with birth, circumcision, coming of age, marriage, death, and burial.

Nor were diaspora Jews unaffected by the dominant culture of the nations among which they lived. The encyclopedia includes articles on specific Jewish communities throughout the diaspora, folk legends about Jews initiated by their gentle neighbors, and the incorporation of non-Hebrew words into a modified spoken vernacular through which oral expressions of folkways were transmitted.

Among the several compilations of Jewish folklore that may already reside on library reference shelves the Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions is unique in its application of rigorous scholarly standards in folklore studies. Alan Unterman’s Dictionary of Jewish Lore and Legend (Thames and Hudson, 1991) employs the richness of Jewish folk culture as a means for understanding Judaism, not as a study in folklore. Entries in the Encyclopedia of Folklore and Literature, edited by Mary Ellen Brown and Bruce A. Rosenberg (ABC-CLIO, 1998) employ the scholarly study of folklore as it relates to world literature but coverage of Jewish themes and authors is limited. Coverage of Jewish folktales is even more limited in The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales edited by Donald Haase (Greenwood Press, 2008, 3 vols.). Jewish folktales included in the second volume of Folklore: an Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art edited by Charlie J. McCormick and Kim Kennedy White (ABC-CLIO, 2011, 2nd edition, 3 vols.) compliment rather than substitute for the more comprehensive Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions. Encyclopedia Mythica (www.pantheon.org), the free online encyclopedia of myths and folktales, includes a section on Jewish folktales that contains as of this writing 194 articles, some little more than a dictionary-type definition. Much of the content in this section has been contributed by Rabbi Geoffrey W. Dennis. Save for Biblical references, sources are unmentioned.

The Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions’ primary readership includes students and scholars engaged in the
fields of folklore studies, Jewish studies, anthropology, sociology, and related disciplines. Terms likely to be unfamiliar to non-Jewish readers have been defined, making articles in the encyclopedia accessible to an interested general readership and thus suitable for public libraries in addition to libraries in academic and religious institutions.—Sally Moffitt, Reference Librarian and Bibliographer, Anthropology, History, Philosophy, Political Science; African American Studies, Asian Studies, Judaic Studies, Latin America Studies, Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies; Cohen Library Enrichment Collection, Langsam Library, University of Cincinnati, Ohio


This two-volume reference set exploring the human mind gets high marks for credibility and comprehensiveness. Editor Harold Pashler is a well-regarded psychologist who has gathered an impressive list of contributors providing “brief but authoritative entries covering all major disciplines concerned with the study of the mind” (xxix). The intended audience is college and university students studying cognitive science and related fields. For this reason, it fills a gap in the existing literature for this subject area. The volumes are of most use to students with a working knowledge of science.

The entries are appropriate in length and depth for reference books. The editor has presented 293 individual topics related to the human mind. Examples of topics covered are Apraxia, Cognitive Dissonance, Desirable Difficulties Perspective on Learning, Gesture and Language Processing, Placebo Effect, Development of Spatial Cognition, and Visual Imagery. The explanations are broken down into common approaches to the subject area: computational, cultural, evolutionary, philosophical perspectives, practical applications, and psychological research.

A strong point is the “Further Readings” list at the end of each entry. This can give a college student a list of additional resources to consider for their research topic. These are accessible from electronic subscription databases on most college and university campus libraries. The “See Also” list of terms after each entry provides more comprehensive information on a topic by referencing other relevant entries. There is consecutive pagination between volumes.

There is one design weakness. While there is consecutive pagination, the index for both volumes is in the back of Volume Two, making it difficult to quickly find entries in Volume One or make it easy to browse both volumes. The List of Entries found in the front matter of both volumes would have been more effective with the page number and volume number next to it for easy access.

In the ongoing struggle between print and electronic resources in libraries, print reference books will need to follow Pashler’s example of credibility and comprehensiveness to survive in the marketplace.—Terry Darr is Library Director at Loyola Blakefield in Towson, Maryland


Charles R. Figley has a long history of writing about issues related to trauma such as Treating Traumatic Stress Injuries in Military Personnel: An EMDR Practitioner’s Guide (Routledge, 2012), Helping Traumatized Families (Routledge, 2012), and Death And Trauma: The Traumatology Of Grieving (Series in Trauma and Loss) (Routledge, 1997) to name a few. So it makes sense that Figley would publish this reference work that fully encompasses the field of trauma. This work is intended to comprise the complete understanding of trauma worldwide throughout history with contributions from scholars worldwide.

The book defines trauma as “a sudden, potentially deadly experience, often leaving lasting, troubling memories” (xxiii). It does seem to cover the breadth of the field of trauma with entries appearing alphabetically by topic that include a diverse span such as: “Abortion,” “Bearing Witness to Trauma,” “Comstock Act,” “Date Rape/Acquaintance Rape,” “EMDR Theory,” “Hate Crimes,” “Military Trauma,” “Peacekeeping Missions,” “Role of Media in Managing Disasters,” and “Slavery and Forced Servitude.”

A Reader’s Guide is provided to categorize the entries with the largest sections being: “Children and Families,” “Crime and Law,” “Culture and Ethnicity,” “Ethics and Philosophy,” “Psychology and Psychiatry,” and “Traumatology and Trauma Recovery.” Each entry includes suggestions for further reading, related entries, and some include resources for victims.

Similar works by others include The Encyclopedia of Psychological Trauma (Ed. by Reyes, Elhai, & Ford, Wiley, 2008) and Doctor & Shiomoto’s The Encyclopedia of Trauma and Traumatic Stress Disorders (Facts on File Library of Health & Living, 2009). There is some overlap between The Encyclopedia of Psychological Trauma and the Encyclopedia of Trauma: An Interdisciplinary Guide but the former work is focused on the field of Psychology including entries on specific mental health disorders and treatments whereas the latter includes broader entries on more than one branch of knowledge.

With its wide array of topics related to the fields of Counseling, Psychology, Psychiatry, Social Work, Medicine, Nursing, Humanities, Politics, Public Health, and Criminal Justice, this work would benefit college and university libraries as well as medical school and law school libraries.—Rachael Elrod, Reference/Instruction Librarian, The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina, Charleston, South Carolina.


The consequential and often lasting impact of major events over the past 500 years has helped to shape the